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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/072,018	02/05/2002	Cheryl L. Beaver	SD-6823	1911
20567 7590 01/18/2007 SANDIA CORPORATION P O BOX 5800 MS-0161 ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87185-0161			EXAMINER BAUM, RONALD	
			ART UNIT 2136	PAPER NUMBER
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS			01/18/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/072,018	BEAVER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ronald Baum	2136	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 October 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 9-11, 18-20, 24, 26 and 27 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 12-17, 21-23 and 25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 12-17, 21-23 and 25 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in reply to applicant's correspondence of 26 October 2006.
2. Claims 1-27 are pending for examination.
3. Claims 1-8, 12-17, 21-23 and 25 are rejected.

Claim Objections

4. Claims 1-8, 12-17, 21-23 and 25 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. All of the claim 1 limitations are contained in claim 9 (i.e., the claim 1 limitations are at the very least redundant).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 1-8, 12-17, 21-23 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. See MPEP § 2173.05(c). Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex*

parte Wu, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claim 1 recites the broad recitation as far as the 5 limitations it consists of, and claim 9 of which as amended, claim 1 depend upon, also recites the same 5 limitations with an additional limitation, which is therefore the narrower statement of the range/*limitation*.

6. As per claim 1; ~~"A method of performing electronic communications between members of a group wherein the communications are authenticated as being from a member of the group and have not been altered, the method~~ The method of claim 9, comprising the steps of:

- generating a plurality of random numbers;
- distributing in a digital medium the plurality of random numbers to
 - the members of the group;
- publishing a hash value of contents of the digital medium;
- distributing to the members of the group
 - public-key-encrypted messages each containing
 - a same token comprising
 - a random number; and

encrypting a message with a key generated from
the token and
the plurality of random numbers.”.

7. Claim 2 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the generating step comprises

generating at least approximately 20,000 random numbers.”.

8. Claim 3 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 2 wherein the generating step comprises

generating 256-bit random numbers.”.

9. Claim 4 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the step of distributing in a digital medium comprises

distributing in a removable digital medium.”.

10. Claim 5 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 4 wherein the step of distributing in a digital medium comprises

distributing in a medium selected from the group consisting of

CD-ROMS and

DVD-ROMS.”.

11. Claim 6 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the steps of publishing a hash value comprises

employing a Secure Hash Algorithm.”.

12. Claim 7 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 additionally comprising the step of

rejecting a digital medium received by a user if

a hash value of contents of the received digital medium does not equal

the published hash value of the contents of the distributed digital medium.”.

13. Claim 8 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the step of distributing a token

is performed daily.”.

14. Claim 12 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the encrypting step comprises

employing symmetric key encryption.”.

15. Claim 13 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the encrypting step comprises

choosing randomly one of the plurality of random numbers.”.

16. Claim 14 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 13 additionally comprising the step of
sending the encrypted message with
an index to the randomly chosen number and
a timestamp sufficient to enable a recipient to determine
a proper decryption token.”.
17. Claim 15 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the group is a domain.”.
18. Claim 16 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein one or more members of the group is a domain.”.
19. Claim 17 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein anonymity of a sender of the message is maintained.”.
20. Claim 21 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the method provides
absolute anonymity for communications between the members.”.

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21. Claim 22 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 21 wherein the method provides

anonymity

as to authorship of the communications and

as to electronic mail routing of the communications.”.

22. Claim 23 *additionally recites* the limitation that; “The method of claim 1 wherein the method provides

anonymity for communications between the members

by not providing for communications between

members of the group within a same domain.”.

23. As per claim 25; ~~“A method of performing anonymous electronic communications between members of a group wherein the communications are authenticated as being from a member of the group and have not been altered, the method~~ The method of claim 24, comprising the steps of:

generating a plurality of random numbers;

distributing in a digital medium the plurality of random numbers to

the members of the group; and

encrypting a message with a key generated from

a token and

the plurality of random numbers while

maintaining anonymity of authorship of the message.”.

Allowable Subject Matter

24. Claims 9-11, 18-20, 24, 26 and 27 are allowable over prior art.

25. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

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Conclusion

26. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from examiner should be directed to Ronald Baum, whose telephone number is (571) 272-3861, and whose unofficial Fax number is (571) 273-3861 and unofficial email is Ronald.baum@uspto.gov. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nasser Moazzami, can be reached at (571) 272-4195. The Fax number for the organization where this application is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. For more information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

NASSER MOAZZAMI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100


11/11/07

Ronald Baum

Patent Examiner

